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Online catalog aimed at resellers

Jennifer M O'Brien. **Computer Dealer News**. Willowdale: Feb 5, 1999. Vol. 15, Iss. 5; pg. 12, 1 pgs

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Abstract (Document Summary)

A new online computer catalog from nxtNet Inc. lists 70,000 computer products from national distributors. The nxtNet Consummate Computer Catalog provides resellers with access to specific e-commerce tools for their business; enables search and sourcing for computer products; and offers a single browser interface to alternate products, sources, and pricing.

Full Text (504 words)

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Canadian resellers have the opportunity to speed up their ordering process thanks to a new online computer catalog that lists 70,000 computer products from national distributors.

Tech Data Canada, Ingram Micro, Merisel and Globelle are currently featured in the online catalog and more distributors are soon to join the team, says Del Chatterson, president of St. Laurent, Que.-based nxtNet Inc.

"We're adding a second tier of the other nationals, in addition to regional and specialty distributors. So there should be at least one and up to seven or eight distributors on each item," Chatterson told CDN.

In a nutshell, the nxtNet Consummate Computer Catalog provides resellers with access to specific e-commerce tools for their business; enables search and sourcing for computer products; and offers a single browser interface to alternate products, sources and pricing.

Direct Web links are available for more details from over 600 listed manufacturers. In addition, authorized resellers are able to link to distributors' Web sites for current inventory and specific reseller pricing, according to a company statement from nxtNet.

"We are very pleased from the early response from all channel participants who appreciate that our objective is to facilitate current processes, not replace anyone's current business model," Chatterson points out.

Essentially, it will "revolutionize" buying and selling patterns, he suggests. He credits San Francisco-based Intershop Communications for providing the e-- commerce development platform. Currently, "there's nothing in the channel that pulls all the information together like this and offers it on a Web access basis," he says.

Rick Reid, president of Mississauga, Ont.-based Tech Data Canada, agrees that the catalog is the "first of its kind and (is) setting the new standard."

Reid says the online tool eliminates the "time-consuming exercise" of tracking down information via phone calls, individual web sites and fax listings.

"This is the first catalog in Canada that groups information about products, pricing and availability into one common application," he suggests, adding that Tech Data provided their e-commerce tools as a model for the catalog.

"With nxtNet, the reseller can see all the information on one page and can jump into the Web ordering portion of any [distributor] and place an order," he says. "It's an outstanding complementary product to our own e-commerce services that will raise reseller confidence and efficiency in their sourcing decisions."

Another feature that may hit home with VARs, Chatterson outlines, is the ability to customize the catalog in order to present the same products and tools to their customers, but only showing the suggested retail and discounted member pricing on each item. "It's a VAR's online storefront," he adds.

From the manufacturers' standpoint, the online storefront is also beneficial. "The interesting thing for the manufacturer is that it responds to their complaint that they spend a lot of money advertising and promoting products to resellers but they have trouble getting the message right on through to the final decision maker which is the end user," Chatterson says.

The current introductory subscription rate for resellers is \$99 for three months of access.

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